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RONALD J. DUNLAVEY

THOUGHTS ON THE SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS

ANNCR: VOA NEWS ANALYST RONALD J. DUNLAVY HAS THESE THOUGHTS ABOUT THE SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS WHICH OPENS TUESDAY IN MOSCOW:

VOICE: LAST FRIDAY, PRAVDA---THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY---CARRIED A FOUR-THOUSAND WORD ARTICLE DEFENDING THE GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS. OBVIOUSLY OF HIGH-LEVEL INSPIRATION, THE ARTICLE DISCUSSED ---AND DENIED--- SPECIFIC CHARGES THAT HAVE BEEN MADE, PARTICULARLY CHARGES THAT DISSIDENTS HAVE BEEN CONFINED TO MENTAL HOSPITALS AND THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT HAS DRAGGED ITS FEET ON PERMITTING FREE MOVEMENT OF ITS CITIZENS.

THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT SUCH PROTESTATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE, BUT OBSERVERS WERE STRUCK BY SEVERAL ASPECTS OF THIS ARTICLE. FOR ONE THING, IT WAS UNUSUALLY LONG, OBVIOUSLY OFFICIALLY-INSPIRED, AND QUITE STRONG IN ITS LANGUAGE. FOR ANOTHER, IT CAME ON THE EVE OF THE SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS. AND FOR ANOTHER, IT CONTAINED WHAT APPEARED TO BE IMPLIED ACCUSATIONS THAT SOME WESTERN EUROPEAN COMMUNISTS HAVE ACCEPTED CHARGES THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE REPRESSED IN THE SOVIET UNION.

WHAT THIS INDICATES---IN THE VIEW OF THESE OBSERVERS---IS A GROWING SENSITIVITY IN MOSCOW TO ALLEGATIONS ABOUT SOVIET FAILURE TO LIVE UP TO THE TERMS AND SPIRIT OF LAST YEAR'S HELSINKI AGREEMENT. THAT AGREEMENT CALLED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, FOR "RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, CONSCIENCE, RELIGION OR BELIEF"---AND FOR ACTIVE PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF "CIVIL, POLITICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RIGHTS." THE

SOVIET PERFORMANCE IN IMPLEMENTING--OR, RATHER, IN FAILING TO IMPLEMENT---THESE TERMS OF THE HELSINKI DECLARATION HAS COME IN FOR INCRASING CRITICISM FROM NON-COMMUNIST SOURCES. BUT MORE RECENTLY, THE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF WEST EUROPE HAVE ALSO EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION WITH THE SOVIET RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS. SUCH CRITICISM HAS COME DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY FROM THE ITALIAN, BRITISH AND BELGIAN PARTIES, AND PARTICULARLY FROM THE FRENCH COMMUNISTS, WHOSE LEADER---GEORGES MARCHAIS---RECENTLY CONDEMNED WHAT HE CALLED "REPRESSIVE MEASURES AND RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF OPINION OR OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AS THEY HAVE OCCURRED IN THE SOVIET UNION."

AST FRIDAY'S PRAVDA ARTICLE APPEARED TO TAKE NOTICE OF SUCH COMMUNIST CRITICISMS. IT EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT "THE BAIT HAS BEEN TAKEN BY SOME OF THOSE WHO COME OUT FOR SOCIALISM BUT THINK THAT THEY CAN BUILD A SOCIETY OF EQUALITY AND JUSTICE WITH THE HELP OF 'CRITICAL'PROMPTINGS FROM THE CLASS ENMIES." SUCH PEOPLE, ADDED THE ARTICLE, ARE "SIMPLY NAIVE."

PRESUMABLY, THIS CRITICISM FROM COMMUNIST SOURCES IS A MINOR FLY-IN THE OINTMENT OF THE PARTY CONGRESS OPENINING TUESDAY. NEVERTHELESS, THERE ARE THOSE WHO WILL FIT IT INTO A PATTERN---THE PATTERN OF RECENT STATEMENTS FROM THE WEST EUROPEAN PARTIES ASSERTING INDEPENDENCE FROM THE DOMINATION OF MOSCOW, PLEDGING TO GAIN POWER BY DEMOCRATIC MEANS, AND REPUDIATING SUCH LONG-HELD DOCTRINES-AS THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND THE MONOLITHIC UNITY OF THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT. AND THE LENGTHY ARTICLE IN PRAVDA WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT MOSCOW ITSELF IS NOT FREE FROM A CERTAIN UNEASINESS---NOT ONLY

ABOUT CRITICISM FROM NON-COMMUNIST SOURCES OF THE SOVIET RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT ALSO ABOUT SIMILAR CRITICISM FROM WITHIN WHAT WERE ONCE TERMED "THE RANKS OF THE FAITHFUL."

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